

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph on page 6 line 1 of the specification with the following amended paragraph:

Accordingly the present invention consists in a\_\_programmable controller |  
including:

at least one user input interface and an input register for connection to process plant and/or machinery to provide sampled and stored input data in digital form,

at least one user output interface and an output register for connection to process plant and/or machinery to receive and store output data in digital form,

programmable logic hardware including a plurality of basic logic elements and electrically configurable interconnections, said interconnections configurable to interconnect the logic elements as a user control program circuit and to connect the user control program circuit to said input and output interfaces,

program loading means to enable the user to configure the programmable logic hardware as a circuit implementing a user control program prior to initiating control of the associated process plant and/or machinery.